

Summary of Language Graduation Requirement Discussion 4-2-08

Mary summarized the committee's critique of the proposal:

- a. BA vs. BS separation
- b. Changing grad requirements would entail significant cutbacks in program requirements especially to programs like liberal studies and early childhood that have limited flexibility in language.

Terry:

What's in the best interest of students? Globally competitive society, affording the empowerment of dual languages among our students.

Not trying to get FTES; Spanish is growing well already.

Feels that a BA and BS have different goals for students--

BA: Focus on well-rounded graduate

BS: Technical or preprofessional programs, more courses in major.

It is common at universities in the country (Western Carolina U, Northern Arizona, SDSU) to make this distinction between BA and BS and required additional languages for the BA.

We're supposed to be innovative, cutting edge, student-centered, mission-centered for international. This proposal would support all of these and may help support the 392 programs as well.

Costs: Many students wait until senior year to take their one semester of foreign language. This doesn't extend their 2 years of high school language.

Monterey Bay and San Marcos require at least 3 semesters of foreign language proficiency.

Could structure it by proficiency level rather than by units.

Want to build off of language diversity in the homes in our state, not to penalize our students but have them develop as best they can in their heritage languages when applicable.

"Wouldn't it be nice if this could have a greater audience, if it could be discussed at Senate or elsewhere."

Beth:

Believes strongly that CI is special, that when we say multiculturalism and internationalism, we're not just talking the talk. It should entail actual knowledge of other cultures, "and what better way to understand a second or third culture than through language. We owe it to ourselves to have this discussion."

Agrees with the distinction between the BA and BS in her experience.

Many students interested in the International programs have only the option of going to English-speaking countries because they are not comfortable in any foreign languages.

She is "very much in support of increased language proficiency requirements."

Terry:

Are there ways for higher unit BA programs to achieve exemptions from the language requirement? Perhaps there are. Monterey Bay does this.

Andrea:

Dissents from the committee's viewpoint from last week about the language requirement. Was "appalled and embarrassed" to find that we only have a one semester requirement for language.

Mary:

Clarified that the committee was in support of the idea of more language but felt that the mechanics of how it is being achieved needs revisiting.

Shaun:

Suggested that embedding the additional languages within the GE program might be a better, more holistic solution for all students.

Alex:

The argument that language is required for global competitiveness and humanism doesn't wash if you don't require it of the BS students.

Jaye:

If this is a core value of the whole organization, it can't be a core value of half of it.

Terry:

So what happens is that this gives the message that we deny it of all of the students.

Some clarification of the committee's intent followed.

Steve:

Strongly supportive of the 2 years and is unconcerned about programs changing requirements. Also supportive that this should be a GE requirement for all students.